

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 L-03 AGR-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

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DRAFTED BY EA/ANP:TJWAJDA:SC

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EA/ANP:RLWILLIAMS

EA:LEEDMOND

EB/ORF/OFPPDTAYLOR

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O R 172225Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, AS, US

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PROPOSAL REGARDING
FTZ MEAT IMPORTS

REF: STATE 203583

1. AUSTRALIAN MINISTER (COMMERCIAL) SMITH TOOK ADVANTAGE OF PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED AUGUST 16 MEETING WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY GREENWALD TO PRESENT HIS VIEWS ON USDA PROPOSAL FOR DEALING WITH MEAT IMPORTED VIA FOREIGN TRADE ZONE (FTZ) AT MAYAGUEZ. SMITH, NOTING HE DID NOT HAVE FORMAL INSTRUCTIONS, SAID HE WAS PERPLEXED AT USG PROPOSAL TO COUNT MEAT IMPORTED THROUGH MAYAGUEZ AGAINST RESTRAINT LEVELS. TO DO SO, ACCORDING TO SMITH, WAS CONTRARY TO THE RESTRAINT AGREEMENT AND INCONSISTENT WITH ASSURANCES HE HAD RECEIVED FROM USG OFFICIALS AT THE TIME AUSTRALIA SIGNED THE 1976 AGREEMENT.

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2. IN RESPONSE TO GREENWALD'S OBSERVATION THAT IMPORTS THROUGH MAYAGUEZ EFFECTIVELY CIRCUMVENTED RESTRAINT AGREEMENT, SMITH STATED THAT FOREIGN TRADE ZONE IMPORTS DATED BACK TO 1971. THE LEGAL STATUS OF SUCH IMPORTS WAS WELL ESTABLISHED.

3. SMITH NOTED THAT GOA PLACES HIGH VALUE ON MEAT TRADE WITH US AND DOES NOT WANT TO SEE FTZ ISSUE JEOPARDIZE THIS TRADE. HOWEVER, THE GOA FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO HOLD BACK AN IMPORTER WHO IS DOING A LEGAL BUSINESS. SMITH OBSERVED THAT MEAT IMPORTS ISSUE IS POLITICALLY VERY SENSITIVE IN AUSTRALIA AND STATED THAT GOA WOULD MOST LIKELY FILE FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS DURING 30 DAY PERIOD PROVIDED BY FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE.

4. AS A PRACTICAL PROBLEM, SMITH SAID FTZ ISSUE WOULD POSE REAL DIFFICULTIES FOR AUSTRALIAN MEAT BOARD WHICH IS EXPECTED TO MEET IN NEXT FEW DAYS TO CONSIDER NEXT MONTH'S SHIPMENTS. COMBINATION OF FACTORS, INCLUDING MEAT CARRIED FROM 1975 INTO 1976 FOR FORMAL ENTRY AND IMPORTS VIA THE FTZ, COULD FORCE AUSTRALIAN EXPORTERS TO CURTAIL FURTHER SHIPMENTS AGAINST 1976 RESTRAINT LEVEL BY MID-SEPTEMBER. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
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Disposition Remarks:
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